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THE ROAD TO ROUEN

By
GENE MARKEY

LITERARY LIGHTS

MEN ABOUT TOWN

THE DARK ISLAND

(With Charles Collins)

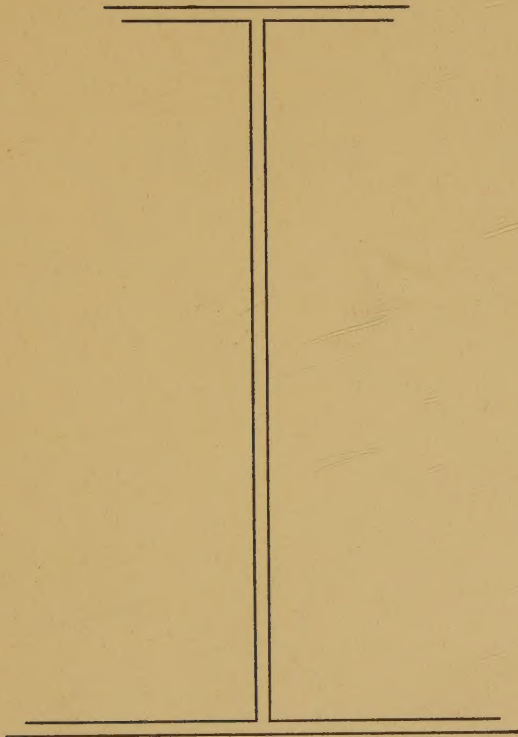
STEPPING HIGH

THE ROAD TO ROUEN

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by

GENE MARKEY



New York

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To
THE LADY

THE ROAD TO ROUEN

I

SO, AT last they were to meet—the Great Lover and the Queen of Hearts. And under what strange circumstances! Anthony Rumbold, Esquire, smiled at the irony of it. As he halted his car before the villa, and honked the bulb-horn, two nimble French footmen in magenta livery appeared and took his kit-bags.

“Monsieur Drury,” queried Anthony, whose French was somewhat better than the English of the footmen, “is he at home?”

Whereupon the footman with the long nose said that Monsieur Drury had

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motored to the Havre, to meet madame his mother, who was landing this afternoon.

In the hallway Aristide, George Drury's butler, received him with a beaming French insincerity and many gestures. Monsieur Drury had left a thousand apologies that he could not personally welcome his guest, but he would return with madame his mother in time for dinner. Meanwhile everything should be done for Monsieur Rumbold's entertainment. Perhaps, after his long motor journey from Paris, Monsieur would desire an *aperitif*? Monsieur certainly would. Well, whiskey and soda. One of the footmen was despatched in haste to bring it.

Anthony stood for a few seconds glancing about. The villa which George Drury had leased for the Deauville season was small, and its bizarre, modernistic furnishings obviously represented the taste

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of a *femme du monde*. A faint, mysterious perfume lingered in the air. Chanel No. 5, decided Anthony, who was something of a connoisseur.

"This place," the butler informed him, "belongs to Mlle. Mimi la Tourte, of the Opéra Comique."

"I believe you," said Anthony. "I expect to hear overture music at any moment."

With Gallic gravity Aristide assured him that there would be no music until the arrival of the American radio machine, for which Monsieur Drury had sent to Paris.

"I only meant," Anthony explained, "that the decorations seem to be in the best traditions of scenic design, and the effect is a bit theatrical. I can't help feeling as if a comedy were about to be acted here."

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“There is a revue playing at the casino,” said Aristide.

Anthony sighed. The light touch was lost upon this fellow.

Aristide poured a whisky and soda, and handed it to him with a flourish.

“I will have someone take Monsieur’s car down to a garage in the town. We have only room for two cars here, and Madame Crewe’s——”

Anthony’s eyebrows lifted. “Mrs. Crewe is already here?”

“She arrived an hour ago, Monsieur.”

Tinkling the ice in his glass, Anthony sauntered through the cool, jade drawing-room, and stood in an open window, gazing down upon sunlit Deauville—the Hotel Normandie and the tennis courts, the white casino, the strip of beach and the shining blue sea. But Anthony saw none of these things. He was thinking of

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that fabled lady, Candace Crewe; trying to remember the names of all her husbands, and to forget the names of all her lovers. And now George Drury—dull, conservative, lovable old George Drury—was to marry her. What queer tricks life played on people. . . .

The tap of a French heel on the polished floor behind him, and Anthony was again aware of that faint mysterious perfume. He turned and saw Candace Crewe come into the room, all in white, and carrying a large Leghorn hat.

II

THOUGH he had never met her, he was familiar with her fame as an *élégante*, for he had often seen photographs of her in the fashion magazines of Paris, London, and New York. But he was not prepared for the exquisite beauty that smote him like a blinding light. Her hair was very fair, and if the crimson fullness of her lips betrayed an emotional nature, it was offset by the calm purity of her wide blue eyes.

She paused, regarding him for an instant with an amused curiosity, and he, being what he was, stared at her with imper-

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tinent admiration. Instantly attraction and antagonism sprang up, vibrant, between them.

"I have often wondered what you'd be like," she said, in a pleasant, slightly husky voice. "You look like an Argentine."

"And you," said he, "look like an angel!"

"Don't begin on your high note." There was a charming mockery in her smile. "Else we shall have nothing to talk about—and George will not be here for several hours."

"I should imagine that George's fiancée and George's best friend would have much to talk about. For example, we might talk about George."

"Which will give you a splendid opportunity to deliver yourself of a few virtuous opinions on the disaster of his

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marrying me."

"I haven't had a virtuous opinion since I was twelve years old. But you don't mind if I confess that I *was* mildly surprised when George announced the glad tidings."

"You were displeased."

"Is a man ever pleased to hear that one of his friends is about to take unto himself a wife?"

"You don't think I'll make the right sort of wife for George?"

"May I pay you the delicate compliment of remarking that I don't think you'd make the right sort of wife for anybody." He waited, watching the swift anger cloud her lovely eyes, then added: "You seem so completely—*beyond* it."

"Next you'll be telling me I was born in the wrong age—that I should have lived in the seventeenth century, and been

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the lady-friend of a king!"

"Nothing so banal. I am only suggesting that a lady with such an interesting history might find life as Mrs. George Drury somewhat unexciting."

"And have you come all the way here to make that knightly suggestion?"

"No, I will be quite honest, for the first time in my life. I came because I was unable to resist the spectacle of your meeting with George's mother. Or shall I say, her meeting with you?"

"Are you so sure that she will disapprove?"

"I am at least sure that *you* will."

"Why? I'm told she's a delightful old lady."

"She is. The last of the Victorians. I don't mean merely that she still keeps horses in New York and drives every afternoon in a mulberry brougham with

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two men on the box. Hers is a more positive Victorianism; a rigorous, iron-clad mode of existence, which moulds the destinies of everyone within her circle. And you, as George's wife, will come very definitely within it. As a matter of fact, her influence extends beyond her own circle, even to the Court of St. James. It is rumored that Queen Mary's milliner gets all her inspirations from Mrs. Drury."

Candace Crewe smiled. "You're trying to frighten me."

"I'm only trying to warn you. A friendly gesture."

"Absurd! You and I can never be friends."

"You infer, perhaps, that we know too much about each other." Anthony was enjoying the situation. "Is there," he asked, "a garden to this place? Or does the owner, like most Parisiennes, prefer

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artificial light even in the daytime?"

"There is a garden," said Candace Crewe. And forthwith led the way.

III

A PINK wall enclosed the garden, which was small and green, with a sun-dial and a meager pattern of flowering shrubs. They seated themselves under a huge orange parasol.

"May I ring for something to drink?"

"Thank you, no." She glanced at a tiny watch set in a jewelled ball, dangling from one of her many bracelets. "It's too late to take you to the races. The last race is being run now. I don't know what to do for your amusement. . . ."

"Let us talk about you and me."

"You mean, let *you* talk—about *me*."

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"I promise you won't be bored."

"How monstrously sure of yourself you are! And your technique is so old-fashioned."

"Technique?"

"Yes. You meet a woman, and proceed at once to say nasty things to her. I know it's supposed to pique her interest, but in my case it fails utterly. Besides, what do you really know about me—except gossip?"

"But there's such a picturesque assortment of that."

"I suppose I am the sort of woman who is talked about in clubs."

"Only the best clubs."

"When cad meets cad." Her eyes were cold as sapphires.

"I've often felt," he said, "that Fate has dealt shabbily with me, in never permitting us to meet before."

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“Possibly proving that Fate can be very, very kind.” She *was* despising him now!

“But I feel neglected—that I haven’t been allowed to play even the smallest part in the pageant of your past.”

“I’ve always been most careful in selecting the cast of characters.”

“Careful? What about the Baron Rapola?”

“Oh, if you are going to name names! Besides, anyone is apt to be wrong about an Italian. If I remember correctly, *you* made rather a spectacle of yourself once over one. The Princess Vascagni——”

He laughed. “She had such divine knees. How was I to know the Prince would turn up?”

“You see, I know rather a lot about *you*.”

“For example?”

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"Well, you have the reputation of never going calling in the afternoon without a shoe-horn in your pocket."

"Merely a good-luck charm, like the rabbit's-foot. Is that all?"

"Your specialty has always been the wives and sweethearts of your best friends."

"We have much in common, haven't we? I recall that two of your husbands were first married to *your* best friends."

"I, at least, married them. The women you should have married out-numbered the ones King Solomon *did*."

"I haven't sufficient ego to believe that I could make an honest woman of anyone by marrying her. So I have remained single."

"The soul of chivalry! The perfect, gentle knight!"

"I would rather be insulted by you

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than flattered by all the other ladies in the world!"

They smiled then, their antagonism burning brightly.

"But I do feel cheated," he said, "that I haven't even been named in one of your divorces."

"You've been named in plenty of others!"

"I never read the newspapers."

"They tell me," said she crisply, "that you are really the Great Lover—the undefeated champion of America. Why is it you've never extended your field of activity to Europe?"

"The only attractive women in Europe are Americans. But over here the game loses its flavor. American women away from home are too easy."

"Not for American men!"

"Have you, too, a preference for

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Argentines?"

"One dances with Argentines—and dismisses them at the door."

"How about the gentlemen of Spain?"

"They are more difficult to dismiss at the door. But all men with only one idea become tiresome."

"And Frenchmen?"

"I am not yet forty-five."

"Bravely spoken," applauded Anthony.

"We are getting on."

"I don't think we are getting on at all," said Candace Crewe. "But your vast conceit fascinates me."

"It isn't conceit. It is merely that I, like you, know the rules of the game. Love is as difficult to play as tennis—more so, because a tennis-player need not train so arduously."

"You sound like a professional."

"Thank heaven, I haven't yet lost my

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amateur standing!"

"And so—American women in Europe are not worthy of the efforts of the last great Don Juan?"

"Don Juan, poor fellow, was much overrated. His whole domestic life might have been straightened out by psychoanalysis, which existed in that age in the simpler form of necromancy."

"I know one or two women over here—" Candace Crewe smiled dangerously, "—who'd give you a run for your money!"

"But I have no money. And if there is anything my countrywomen are *not* interested in, it's a man with no money."

"You appear to do very well."

"A poor but honest fellow, trying to get along."

"I don't believe you're poor—and you certainly aren't honest!" She glanced

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again at her watch, and rose with feline grace, pretending to yawn. "It's five o'clock. I am going for a walk. Would you care to come along?"

Anthony stood up without haste. He was determined not to accede a single point in this warfare that existed between them. If she could simulate boredom, so could he. "At what hour do we dine—*en famille?*"

"Eight-thirty, I believe."

"Then let us take a very long walk, so that we'll be tired enough to be unusually dull at dinner. That will please George's mother."

IV.

CANDACE did not reply, but there was a frown upon her brow as she led the way through the garden-gate.

With amiable malice he continued: "May I ask when you expect to take the veil?"

"You mean the bridal veil? A poor joke——"

"It's not a joke. The Drury ménage in New York is more of a monastery than you realize—and with an extremely watchful Mother Superior."

The frown upon her brow deepened. "George wants to be married next

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month."

"You will return to America to live, of course."

"I'm afraid so. George is firmly convinced that the bank could not get along without him." She sighed.

"And how long have you enjoyed your gay exile over here?"

"Six years. I came to get a divorce——"

"And remained to become a pillar of the American Colony, which out of unescapable ennui folds its tents more often than the Arabs, and moves on restlessly from Paris to the Riviera, St. Moritz, Biarritz, Antibes—pardon me if I sound like a station-master calling trains."

They had descended a sloping street, past the clustered villas and the empty tennis-courts. Only solemn nursemaids and chubby children were to be seen, for

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this was the cocktail hour.

A long gray car, in which sat a turbaned, whiskery Maharajah and a once-famous American movie star, rolled by, then came abruptly to a stop. The movie star, no longer so blonde nor so beautiful as in the days when he had known her, hailed Anthony shrilly, and urged him to look for her in the casino at eleven.

The incident appeared to annoy Candace Crewe. "One meets all the *déclassée* women of Europe here," she said, as they walked on. "Deauville is as vulgar as Atlantic City. I can't understand why in the world George took a place here for August, when everybody is at the Lido——"

"Because dear old George isn't a snob," defended Anthony good-humoredly.

"Snobbery is one's only protection against the wrong people."

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"But I love the wrong people!"

"Well, *I* don't. That's why I prefer Europe. Over here even the wrong people are so much more right."

"I," said Anthony, "am one of those queer Americans who like America."

She shrugged. "We don't agree about anything—you and I."

He offered no reply, and they walked along, past rows of deserted bathing cabins, to the hard sand beach. An elderly life-guard, in a red shirt and pirate mustachios and a yachting cap, his trousers rolled high on his bare legs, stood viewing the sunset. It was not much of a sunset, and Candace Crewe paid no attention to it.

"I am certain," said she, "that you actually believe the stories of what a dangerous man you are."

"On the contrary, I do my best to

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convince every woman who thinks I am dangerous, that I am not. But you know women—they will go to any lengths to win an argument.”

She yawned prettily. “Shall we turn back now? I feel a little sleepy.”

“It’s the sea air,” he told her.

They quitted the beach and sauntered up a side street, where they found a fiacre with a fat, rosy driver who pretended to understand Anthony’s French; and as Candace Crewe settled down in the narrow seat beside him Anthony was tensely aware of her nearness. They did not speak during the drive up the hill, and when the fiacre halted before the villa she stepped down, avoiding his hand, and without a word, went in. After he had finished paying the *cocher*, Anthony followed her, but she had disappeared. Aristide informed him that madame had

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gone to her room for forty winks.

"Monsieur Drury has just telephoned from the Havre that the ship of madame his mother is delayed and will not dock until this evening," added Aristide, as if the matter were of no importance. "So monsieur and madame his mother will not arrive until to-morrow morning."

"The devil!" muttered Anthony.

"Yes, monsieur. And dinner is at eight-thirty."

V

THEY dined across a candle-lit table on a small terrace, giving on the garden, and there was a scent of roses from the shadowy garden-wall.

"My good Aristide," said Anthony, "will you see if there are stars to-night?"

Gravely, Aristide went to the edge of the terrace, and glanced upward. "Yes, monsieur, there are stars."

"And have you in the cellar a bottle of Anjou *rosé*?"

"But, yes, monsieur."

"Good. Then I shall be sentimental." He smiled across at Candace Crewe. "You

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aren't a bit like her—but the setting is similar. It brings up memories."

"You must have so many," she replied crisply. "I should think you'd get them mixed."

"Ah, but *this* memory was very sweet. Do you want to hear the story?"

"Not particularly."

"Well, you should. It has a fine moral to it. Once upon a time, and not so long ago, a fellow and a girl sat at dinner in the courtyard of the old inn at Falourde. You know that place?"

She nodded. "That little village where the ferry crosses the Seine, on the road to Rouen."

"The road to Rouen," nodded Anthony, "which is, of course, the road to Paris. Those were the days of Trouville, when this Deauville was nothing, and the fellow and the girl had come by motor from

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Trouville, in hot haste, for they were running away. At the old inn at Falourde they stopped for dinner——”

“If they were running away in hot haste, how could they stop for dinner?”

“Apparently you are not familiar with the old inn at Falourde. It is one of the last romantic spots in France, famous for the comfort of its—well, let us say, famous for its cellar and its cuisine. Even runaway couples would be foolish to pass by without looking in. As I say, the fellow and the girl were lingering over dinner in the sixteenth-century courtyard, and it was just such an evening as this—stars, the scent of roses. And a bottle of Anjou *rosé*. . . .” He sighed.

“Is that all there is to the story? You said it had a moral.”

“So it has. The fellow’s car was waiting at the ferry-landing, but the ferry was on

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the other side. Toward the end of dinner, the fellow's chauffeur appeared, asking to speak with him. So he went out, and the chauffeur told him that the ferry had broken down on the other side, and would make no more trips that night. The fellow returned to the table—and here is the moral of the story. He convinced the girl that running away was rather silly, after all, and ten minutes later they were on the road back to Trouville. Half way there, they encountered the girl's husband racing toward them in another car, and when the husband found that she had only been for a drive, he was overjoyed. And they lived happily ever af—at least till their divorce, a year later."

"You never saw her again?"

"No. That is why the memory of that evening—and the stars and the scent of

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roses—remains so sweet.” He smiled. “And now here is Aristide with wine. . . .”

“A very touching story,” said Candace Crewe. “I had no idea that your life had been so crowded with good deeds. Restoring runaway wives to the arms of their husbands is a beautiful old custom, and should be encouraged.”

“Yet I have lost many friends that way.”

“Husbands?”

“No—wives.”

They were a handsome pair across the white table in the candle-light—he so dark, and she so fair; and twice during dinner the chef and the little scullery-maid crept to the pantry door to peer in at them admiringly. After liqueurs had been served Aristide signaled the two footmen away, and, being a seasoned Parisian butler, himself withdrew discreetly.

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Not once had Candace Crewe made mention of their host's absence, nor had Anthony spoken of it. And as the candles burned lower and the stars burned higher, a silence fell upon them. Each was conscious of the restlessness that rippled like a tide beneath their moods. They resented each other now more than ever, yet they were being drawn together by an irresistible force. And neither would make the first advance. Somewhere a clock chimed eleven.

She rose with a nervous gesture, smoothing the tulle ruffles of her peach-colored gown. "If you don't stop looking at me with that smirking satyr expression I shall scream!"

"My expression? Innocent as a choir-boy's! But it is refreshing to know that ladies still scream." He got up leisurely, and followed her into the drawing-room.

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"I am bored," lied Candace Crewe.
"Let us go to the casino for some amusement."

"I was about to suggest it," lied Anthony.

His acquiescence annoyed her. The casino was the last place she wished to go.
"Please ring for my car," she commanded.

VI

THE casino from the outside reminded Anthony of a movie theater. Within, it was clamorous with dance-music and a surging crowd in evening attire: most of the women wearing too many jewels, most of the men wearing too many chins. And everyone stared at everyone else with the empty eyes of pleasure-hunters. The Dolly Sisters were very much in evidence, and little Sem, the caricaturist, and M. Letellier, who owned so many newspapers, and who was the Mayor of Deauville. There were others, too: several hundred of them.

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"Next week," said Candace Crewe, "the King of Spain arrives."

"The name sounds familiar," said Anthony, "but I don't think I've met him."

For a while they watched an uninspired revue, which was just like any other French revue.

"I," she remarked, "have never *seen* such hideous chorus-girls."

"Don't be unkind to them," reproved Anthony, "I'm sure they're somebodies' mothers."

Restlessly they moved on to the dancing-salon, and sat close together at a small table, and ordered a bottle of champagne, though they drank none of it. He did not ask her to dance, nor did she suggest it. Her face was the expressionless mask of the fashionable beauty, but her eyes seemed unnaturally bright. Anthony noted this symptom with encouragement.

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At length she dropped her cigarette in an untouched glass of champagne. "I am going in to the tables," she announced coldly. "Will you come along, or do you prefer to sit here flirting with that overdressed woman from Grand Rapids?"

"If there is another woman in this room, I have not seen her!" he declared. And, as he followed her through the crowd, he smiled to himself with malicious satisfaction. What a valiant adversary she was!

At one o'clock he had lost a thousand francs at *chemin-de-fer*. That was his limit. As he walked across to the baccarat tables he beheld Candace Crewe rise, gather her cloak about her superb white shoulders and come toward him. On their way out to the motor, they did not speak.

In the dim interior of her cabriolet, she nestled back among the cushions.

"Lose?" inquired Anthony.

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She nodded, her eyes closed.

"So did I," he said. "Oh, well, you know the old Persian proverb: unlucky in the casino, lucky in the boudoir."

"Don't be coarse!" Her voice was angry.

The next second she was in his arms, and their lips were clinging together fiercely.

The car had been standing in front of George Drury's villa for several minutes before either of them realized it. Suddenly, almost rudely, Anthony disengaged himself, flung open the door and leaped out. He did not even proffer his hand, and in sullen fury Candace let the chauffeur assist her to alight.

VII

ANTHONY opened the door with a latch-key, having advised Aristide that there would be no need to wait up for them. Within the hallway he did not touch the light-button. They stood silently apart in the throbbing darkness, listening to their own heart-beats. He could taste the scent of her lipstick, and she could feel his smouldering eyes. But neither of them made the first move. It had been war from the moment they met; their kisses had been but a passionate truce—but now the war was on again, and each was determined not to surrender.

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Stormily she was thinking: "I'll *make* him give in!"

And he was thinking: "Your next play, my lady, will be to give *me* a slap, in return. We shall see!"

"Good night," she said abruptly.

If she had expected objections, she must have been disappointed.

"Good night," said he.

She took a step toward the stairs.

Then Anthony spoke lightly. "Don't lock your door. I'm coming up to hear your prayers."

"Oh, no, you're not!"

"Oh, yes, I am!"

She knew that he would come. And he knew that she knew it. Without another word she was gone.

Thoughtfully he moved across to a window, and stood staring out. And the night was no darker than his thoughts.

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This dénouement was inevitable. He and Candace Crewe were, *au fond*, the same sort; they played by the same rules, and when rules interfered they disregarded them. According to their code, all was fair—and love and war meant the same thing. Even at the instant when their antagonism flamed highest, each had realized that it was only a question of time until . . .

A fine state of affairs, with the man she was to marry—and his mother—arriving in the morning!

“It isn’t only that he is my best friend,” mused Anthony, “but the entire situation is what might be described, indelicately, as a mess. It touches my professional pride.” Thrusting his hands into the pockets of his dinner-jacket, he fell to pacing back and forth. “And at this very moment the most desirable of women is

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waiting to hear my step on the stair. Something must be done!"

Of a sudden he halted and drew from one of his pockets a small square of paste-board. It was the claim-check for his car, in the Deauville garage.

"The gods have spoken," murmured Anthony, and went up-stairs.

In his room, a pair of raspberry silk pajamas and a blue dressing-gown and slippers, had been laid out by the footman who was valeting him. Anthony gazed upon them wistfully for a few seconds, then, with a sigh, flung them into a kit-bag. His toilet-case, a handful of intimate apparel, a tweed suit and a pair of boots followed. Hastily he scrawled a note to George Drury, then seized his motoring-coat, clapped on an old hat, and carrying his kit-bag, crept down the hall. At the top of the stairs he glanced

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toward Candace Crewe's door, and appeared to waver slightly.

"No!" he declared, with a righteous shake of his head. "She has always had her way with men. This time, if I may say so, she has met her match." And down the stairs he tip-toed, softly opened the door, and fled.

At the garage in town, he tossed his kit-bag into the car and wheeled it forth. In his heart there was a great clamor to be gone, and soon he was upon the high-road, the lights of Deauville behind him, driving like a man pursued by the devil. Through sleeping Trouville he passed, and sped up the long winding hill, headlights splitting the night, along the road to Rouen.

VIII

TOWARD three o'clock he drew up before the old inn at Falourde. A sleepy and suspicious pot-boy came out with a lantern and took his bag, and showed him where to stable his car in the ancient coach-house.

Yes, there was a room for monsieur: a large room with a balcony, overlooking the Seine. They climbed a flight of stairs that creaked, the pot-boy jingling keys like a Spanish jailer, until they came to the chamber, which was large and clean, with an immense canopied bed.

Wearily, Anthony flung off his clothes

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and opened the tall windows. A fragrant breeze ruffled the starched curtains.

“On such a night as this,” he sighed, “men should be stirred to adventurous deeds. And here am I, running away. Well, to-morrow is another day. . . .”

Whereupon he tumbled into the huge, billowy bed, and was soon asleep.

IX

WARM noonday sunlight fell across his eyes, rousing him. He lay for a few seconds lazily contemplating the chaste pattern of the wall-paper, and the polished pine furniture. And the thought occurred to him that he might have wakened this morning in quite a different chamber. But he could scarce repress a smile that by running away he had foiled that legendary lady, Candace Crewe, who had always so ruthlessly toyed with the hearts of men. At length, he crawled forth and punched several bell-buttons, hoping that, contrary to custom in French

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inns, something would happen. And to his astonishment an undersized *garçon d'étage*, who looked like a mouse, though with less of a moustache, appeared.

The *garçon d'étage* was almost offensively good-natured. He knew all about monsieur's arrival in the night, and he vouchsafed the hope that monsieur had slept well.

Monsieur assured him that he had. And now, what about breakfast? Some fruit, crescents and chocolate. Good.

Anthony busied himself with the odious task of shaving, and in an incredibly short time the *garçon d'étage* returned bearing a folding table and a covered tray.

"A fine morning, Monsieur," beamed the *garçon d'étage*.

"I hope you are right," said Anthony, and stepped out upon the balcony, a gallant figure in his raspberry pajamas.

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Geraniums bloomed along the railing and it was all very warm and pleasant. Below, the Seine flowed tranquilly past, and on the opposite bank, where another Normandy village basked in the sunlight, he could see the antiquated ferry-boat moored at its landing. But no smoke curled upward from its stack.

"Look here," he called, "what's the matter with the ferry?"

"It is broken, monsieur."

"What—*again?*"

"Pardon, monsieur?"

"Is it *always* broken?"

"They say it hasn't happened before in seven years."

"And I was here *that* time!"

The *garçon d'étage* grinned politely. These Americans were great jokers. "They will have it repaired by evening, monsieur."

"Good Lord!" exclaimed Anthony "am

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I to be marooned here all day?"

"Pardon, monsieur." The *garçon d'étage* lifted a finger to his lips. "We must not wake up the lady in the next room."

Anthony turned and saw that another pair of French windows opened off the little balcony.

"Do you mean there's a lady in there?"

"But yes, monsieur. She, also, arrived late in the night."

And then Candace Crewe, in pajamas that were the color of tea-roses, walked out through the French windows, upon the balcony.

They stared at each other in shocked amazement. And Anthony understood. She, too, had been running away. *From him!* And he realized from the swift triumphant gleam in her blue eyes that she believed he had followed her. Well, after all, he was what is known as a

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gentleman. There was but one thing to do.

He bowed, with his most charming smile. "Breakfast," he said. "I had just ordered covers laid for two."

"Oh!" said she, and her long eyelashes fluttered in a mysterious smile.

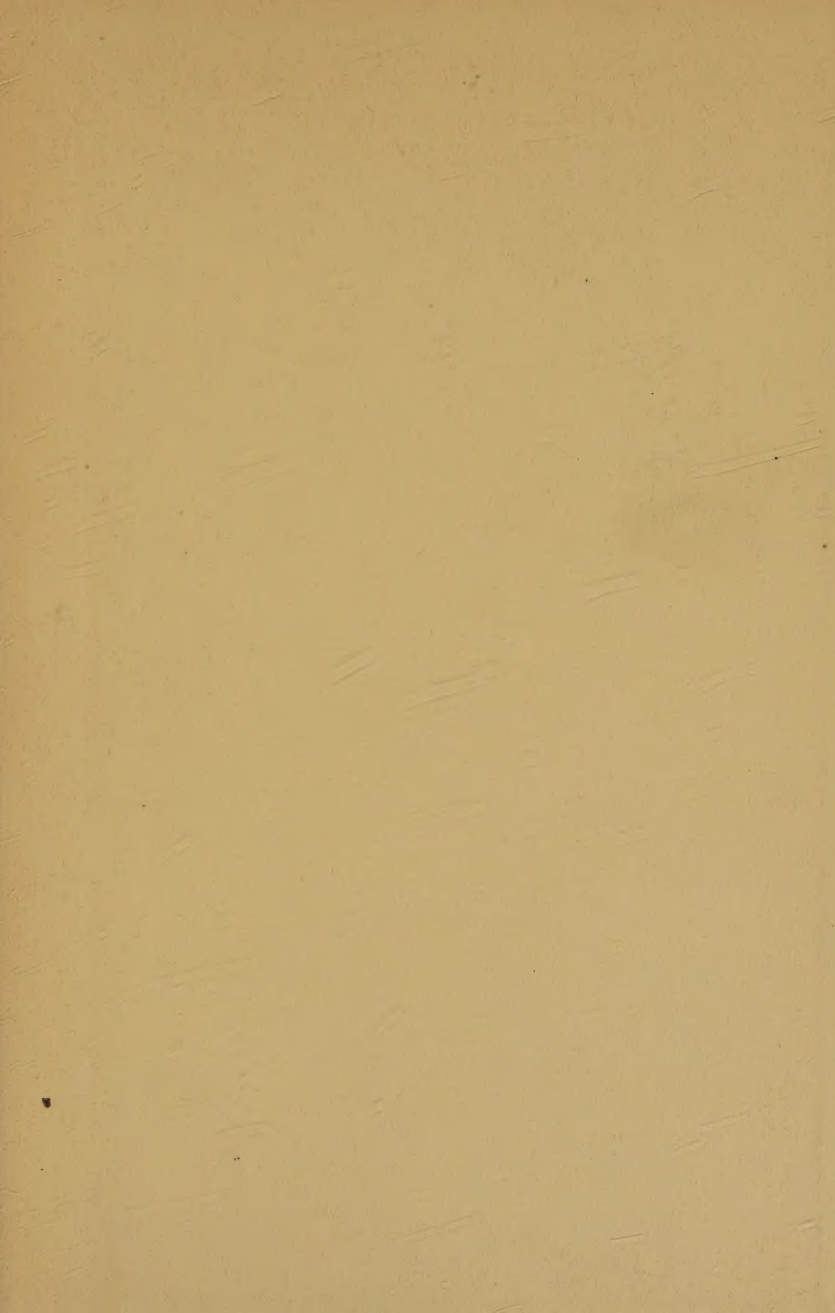
Then it was that Anthony winked at the *garçon d'étage*.

And the *garçon d'étage*, looking more like a mouse than ever, winked back at him. Ah, well, they were such handsome young people, and it was such a lovely day.

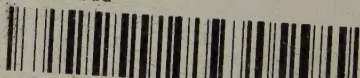
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